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number of different graphical types, the author has applied with fidelity the fundamental rule of graphical presentation which prescribes the inclusion of the zero line. The procedure followed throughout the report of placing figures at the ends of bars of varying length and inserting figures in bars and columns may be open to question from the standpoint of optical effect, but it does not seem that the results are in any case misleading. The presentation of figures upon which graphical representations are based constitutes sound and useful practice. With the exception of those on pages 41 and 42, which fall well below the prevailing standard of execution, the statistical maps are admirable.

The report is, a successful venture in the field of statistical journalism; to quantitative subject matter of current interest the author has imparted proportion and vividness. He has done much in addition to this. Without attempting a complete mapping of the statistical territory created by the war, he has established landmarks which will be of great value to workers concerned with the details of special problems. He has produced, also, a convenient and readable handbook which, as a source of authoritative and definite information about some of the central facts of American participation in the war, will be useful for an indefinite period.

EARLE CLARK.

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#### STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

The subject of statistical study of the influenza epidemic was brought up at a special meeting of this Association held March 28, 1919, at the City Club, New York City. A speaker representing the Vital Statistics Section of the American Public Health Association outlined what had been accomplished by a committee of that organization in planning statistical studies of American influenza data. The speaker indicated the bearing upon modern statistical practice of what had been done for the data of the epidemic of thirty years ago, quoting Leichenstern\* as to the contributions which the statistical profession had made to the history of influenza.

"Epidemiologic investigation is much indebted to modern statistics for its progress, to the high development of medical journalism, and to the powers that have been universally brought to bear toward achieving collective investigations and scientific researches."

The German Collective Investigation by Geyder and Guttmann; the exhaustive reports by Parsons (1889-1892); the French Academy report by Proust-Brouardel, and the army report of Kelsch and Antony; the Russian report by Teissier; the Belgian "*enquête sur l'épidémie de grippe*"; the Dutch report of Solomonson and de Rooj; the Danish report by Carlssen; the Swedish by Linroth; the Egyptian by Engel-Bey; as well as the investigation by Abbott (Massachusetts), and for Riga, Cologne and Danzig, were mentioned as types of statistical inquiries providing the pattern for researches into the recent epidemic.

\* "Nothnagel's Encyclopedia of Practical Medicine," Saunders, Phila., 1905.

Some statisticians have expressed a doubt that the disease known as "influenza" today is the same disease observed by the collective investigations of thirty or more years ago. A survey of the literature on influenza for the past one hundred years indicates, however, that this doubt has been expressed at the time of each epidemic. In fact, no introduction to a collection of influenza statistics seems to have been complete, in times past, without some sort of observation of this kind.

Continuing, the speaker held that there were, in general, two approaches to the mystery of influenza, the one, an *intensive* inquiry into the clinical, particular aspects of the disease; the other, an *extensive*, statistical collection of facts. It is the function of the statistician to supplement the facts and conclusions of the intensive case-worker, with the broader conclusions drawn from a survey of various groups in the communities affected by the epidemic.

Work upon plans for the statistical, or extensive, study of the epidemic in American communities was begun by the Vital Statistics Section of the American Public Health Association, on November 20, 1918, by the appointment of an emergency committee which met on November 29 and 30, 1918, at the Hygiene Laboratory, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. The aim of this committee was to secure from the registrars and public health statisticians of the eastern states, a statement of minimum requirements in a programme of statistical study of the epidemic. This programme was submitted to the Vital Statistics Section at its meeting in Chicago on December 11, at which time the recommendations of the committee were considered, and the committee empowered to continue its work.\* Further notes on this committee's proceedings are to be found in the March, 1919, *QUARTERLY PUBLICATIONS OF THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION* and in the February, 1919, number of the *American Journal of Public Health*. The remarks of the speaker representing this committee closed with a request that the American Statistical Association lend its encouragement to the thorough statistical study of the epidemic. Only through such collection of materials would there be available a body of epidemiologic data of value in determining the causes, extent, and other characters of the recent epidemic, and the control of future visitations of the disease. Special emphasis was placed upon the need for methods of higher analytic description of the disease—methods developed by the English biometricians and by the French and Scandinavian mathematicians. A suggestion was also made that the epidemic be studied mathematically as a phenomenon in bio-chemistry, making use of the theories of measurement in that science as advocated by Professor Svante Arrhenius and others of the Stockholm School.

President Hill appointed a committee to prepare a resolution which is given below. The members of the American Statistical Association present at the meeting endorsed this resolution in substance.

\*"Influenza Bulletin," *Amer. Public Health Association*, Boston, Mass., Dec. 13, 1918.

## RESOLUTION.

*Whereas*, The prevention of future catastrophic invasions of influenzal disease depends in part upon the conclusions which will follow a thorough statistical study of the epidemic and,

*Whereas*, The advances in statistical and mathematical science in recent years have made it possible to determine more readily the nature, probable causes, extent and perhaps the methods of control of such epidemics, in relation to climate, habitat, race, economic status, and other aspects of the life of mankind,

*Therefore Be It Resolved*, That the American Statistical Association, at its special meeting held in New York City, March 28, 1919, endorses the work begun by the American Public Health Association, and by other bodies associated with it, in outlining programmes for the tabulation and analysis of influenza statistics by municipal, state, federal and private organizations,

*Furthermore Be It Resolved*, That the Association urges qualified statisticians of its membership and in statistical societies elsewhere to apply every technical resource of modern statistical science in the study and interpretation of the published influenza data.

*Committee on Resolutions:*

G. H. VAN BUREN,

F. S. CRUM,

E. W. KOPF (Chairman).

## ANENT THE NEW AND THE OLD IMMIGRATION.

Mr. Paul H. Douglas in the June issue of the *QUARTERLY* has undertaken to answer the question, "Is the new immigration more unskilled than the old?"

"It is commonly stated," he says, "that the newer immigration from Southeastern Europe is more unskilled than the older immigration from Northwestern Europe. This has been challenged by a few writers, *but it has not by any means been effectually refuted.*"

He therefore proceeds to compare the statistics of the old and the new immigration and comes to the conclusion that all the change amounts to is that "the unskilled laborers from the Southeast have displaced the unskilled laborers from the Northwest."

"If this long accepted belief in the higher percentage of skilled workers among the old immigration is, after all, erroneous, why has it been cherished for so long?" inquires Mr. Douglas. And he answers that, among other causes, it is due to "the custom of each generation to view the immigrants of its days as inferior to the stock that once came over."

These are precisely the conclusions which I have reached in my book "Immigration and Labor," referred to by Mr. Douglas. I am chagrined to learn from his article that "impartial students" have been led "to discredit the value of his (my) conclusions." Perhaps the methods by which